

m.j.c. *247*
A
MANUAL
OF
The Practical Part
OF
Christian Religion.

**By one that desires to leave it as a
Remembrance to Friends, and
all Pious Persons.**

Joh. 5. 39.
Search the Scriptures.



L O N D O N :

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MANUAL

OF

The Practical Part

OF

Christian Religion.

By one of the learned ministers of the
Congregation to the Lord, and
of the Church of the Lord.

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OF all the duties of a Christian, I know none of higher concern, than the diligent enquiry into

The Word of God.

By which we must not only try our hearts, but also our ways; our encouragement is great herein: For first, We have God's command for it. Next, they

- they are our Records or great Charter for our being made free Denizens of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*. Thirdly, the Lord saith, They are they that testify
- Joh. 5. 39. of him. And if the great and wise King, gave his heart to find out Wisdom; how much more have we, that are so far beneath him, cause to complain of our inabilities to find out the great secrets of God's Word? and therefore it behoves us to search out our interest in them, seeing they are able to make
- 2 Tim. 3. 15. wise to salvation; without which all Wisdom is but folly, and will turn to vanity and vexation of spirit. St. James
- Jam. 1. 5. saith, *If any want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not:* and when God shall behold our carefulness to search our hearts according to the rule of his Word, he will answer our endeavours, and labours, saying,
- Jer. 29. 13, 14. *I will be found of them that seek me. And, if they call upon me in the time of*
- Pla. 91. 15. *trouble, I will hear them, and also deliver them.* But is God only to be found in his Word? Hath he not set apart a place for his peculiar services? Did not
- Psal. 26. 8. *David say, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour*

honour dwelleth? In the house where God's worship is rightly performed, his holy Ordinances observed, his Word purely taught, in the spirit of Love, Truth, and Holiness, there we are sure to meet our dearest Lord; for that is the place of which he hath said, *His eyes shall be open, and his ears attent to the Prayers made in that place; and, that he will sanctifie that house, that his name might be there for ever, and that his heart should be there perpetually.* Yet God's Word must not be rudely handled, by every fantastick spirit; but by such as can divide the great mysteries therein, according to the excellencies contained in them. Without them we sit in darkness and shadow of death: but their Light, *David* saith, was a light to his paths, and a lanthorn to his feet, to guide his steps into the way of everlasting peace. Therefore it is not the least pitiable thing to see how many, upon the conceit of their own illuminated gifts, press into *Moses* chair, without premeditating what they are to utter, presuming upon that Text of our Saviours, who in another sense told his Disciples, *Take no thought before hand,*

2 Chron. 7. 15, 16.

Mark 13. 11.

what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the holy Ghost. Not considering that premeditation is as a coal from the Altar, which continues a flame of Devotion in the mouth of his Teachers: for want of which there are many, who having excellent gifts, yet when soaring up on the wings of Faith and Prayer, are sometimes suddenly surprised and at a loss what to say, and so cast a damp upon the spirits of their hearers, and lose much of that sweetness which should close up with Jesus, the object of our faith, and subject of all our happiness; not minding the words of the Preacher, *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* Nor that of the Prophet Jeremiah, *O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; nor is it in man to direct his steps.* Nor that text, *Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble, and wilt prepare their heart:* Which made the Prophet David so earnestly pray, *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength,*
and

Eccl. 5. 2.

Psal. 19.

14.

and my redeemer : which is the rather obtained, if we search our hearts and try our wayes, which is a large step of turning to the Lord ; for we must all try our condition by the touchstone of the Word, whether we may be able to hold out in the day of Judgment : therefore to mitigate that dreadful sentence, let us begin with our selves here by a sober examination of all our wayes, what

Sincerity

Of affection to holy duties, what longings after Christ ; as thirsting for him more then *David's* Hart for the water brooks ; for God will not be satisfied with doing duties, but with what affection or cheerfulness we do them ; and whether it be not an affliction to be hindered or debarr'd soul communion with our Lord and Master, or if they be done for fear of Judgments rather than in obedience to Gods commands, which is a search becoming every good soul ; and if in reality she can say with *Peter*, *Joh. 21.* Lord thou knowest I love thee, and with *15.*

Cant. 5. 8. the Spouse, *I am sick of love.* Happy soul who ere it be, that thus longs for the fountain of living waters ! We find when the people of God under their sad afflictions, in the days of *Jeremiah*, in their dolorous condition ; then being convicted, and not knowing what to do, could say, *Let us search and try our ways, and turn to the Lord our God, for we have rebelled.* We find in the holy Word of God the great advantages a true search of heart hath done. It made *David* diligent in communing with his God, and to search out his Spirit. It put him to the tryal whether he could confidently say, *The Lord is my strong rock, my fortress, my deliverer, in whom I trust, my buckler, and my salvation:* for he knew God beheld his thoughts afar off, for his secret thoughts were open in his sight. And therefore in regard that the greatest secrecies of the soul of man, are not at all known to men ; (for who knows those things but God, who is the searcher of hearts and tryer of the reins, and with him the spirit of man that is in him) how necessary is it by that Spirit to search the heart ? Let Truth keep Court there, and she must

Lam. 3.
40, 41.

must discover the close lurkings of Hypocrisie, that seem fair to all the world, devout in Religious Exercises, constant in outward performances, zealous in good works; yet conscience must give in evidence, and when this fair vizard is pulled off, it will find the weeds of Pride, the risings of Ambition, the swellings of Envy, the raging of Anger, the fury of Passion, putting forth their heads when but a little temptation offers it self. Every day of our lives we may not improperly say, 'tis high time to search our hearts, and try our wayes; knowing how uncertain our time is, and how certain the time will be when we must give an account of whatsoever we have either spoke, done, or in the most private recesses of our hearts we have thought, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. And therefore he that keeps the heart sincere and clean, and pure, shall live most happy here, and be able to give the best account when he comes to the great reckoning hereafter. *The Statutes of the Lord*, by which we shall be judged, are pure, and his commands right; & these are said by the Psalmist, to

Psalm. 19. 8.
rejoyce

rejoyce the heart: but what heart must that be, but that which hath a conscience in its self, of a watchful endeavour to keep its self pure and sincere. He that hath purity of heart, Shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. The disposition of the heart influences all the actions of man, and so much of purity and cleanness, so much of acceptableness unto God. Cain and Abel both sacrificed, and possibly Cain, as being the elder brother, might bring to the Altar a larger offering than his Brother Abel; yet Cain was rejected, Abel was accepted: for God did not look so much on the gifts, as the hearts of the givers. According to the spring in a Watch, such is the motion. According to the heart, such are all actions that proceeds from man: If the heart be pure, words will not be unclean, actions will not be irregular. St. Paul exhorting Timothy, tells him the way how to fulfil the commandments of God, and that is, by Love flowing out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. 'Tis this sincerity that links together all those graces that makes the soul enjoy it self. By this the conscience

1 Tim. i.
5.

is purged from dead works. Where there is this purity, our Wisdom will be pure, our love without dissimulation, and all the practises of Religion will savour of that sweetness, and our whole conversation accordingly influenced: and if those things be, then we may hope to share in those blessings that are entailed on those whom Christ hath pronounced blessed, even *the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* Mat. 5. 8. How great a care then ought we to have, to make diligent search into our hearts, to find how rich we are in this kind of treasure; for *the heart of man* (as he is in a natural condition) *is deceitful above all things,* Jer. 17. 9. and most apt to deceive it self. When it is impatient, how much bitterness does it add to troubles, and makes Gods arrows wound the deeper? but in the clean and sincere heart, the faculties of the soul are so sweetly tempered, that under any affliction, there is an humble submission to the disposal of Divine Providence. If the sun of prosperity shines comfortably, then her labour is the more to walk in an humble fear of being puffed up: being mindful of *Aguis* request, desiring only conveniencies

Prov. 30. 8.

Rom. 8.
28.

veniences to prevent the evil of a murmuring spirit. But the pure in heart grasps fast that promise, *That all things shall work together for their good that love and fear God.* A carnal heart is more troubled for fear of pain and of punishment, like to ensue through extravagant courses, unworthy actions, or misdemeanors, than for offending God. But the sincere heart struggles more to suppress the power of sin, and to subdue natural corruptions, and sudden growing iniquities, than to obtain the highest honour, pleasure, or profit that the world can afford: for she finds it harder to conquer her self, than all the world beside; and therefore she enters into discourse with conscience concerning the charge she hath to lay against her, for every dayes employment in the market of the world. She will not leave all to the last great account, but endeavours to make even what she can; and what she fails in, she petitions her surety Christ Jesus to discharge for her, praying with *David, Be surety for thy servant, O Lord:* for she's always afraid of being orepowred by the World, the Devil, or the Flesh, those three great enemies,

Psal. 119.
132.

enemies, the least having an innumerable Army to contest with, temptations and trials of all sorts. And therefore every one should watch, in the watch-tower of a diligent heart, and endeavour to keep the eyes of his understanding open continually, to prevent their dangerous snares, lest his soul be drawn from its first Love, and give the Divine goodness cause to pronounce a bill of divorce against it. Press therefore close in the duties of holiness after God here, and thou shalt surely see him in glory hereafter. Search into the cabinet of thy soul (if it aims at sincerity and purity) what thy longings, hungings and thirstings after Christ are. Are they *David's* thirst for God, which *Psal. 42. 1.* was more than the chased Hart after the water-brooks: his eyes did prevent the call of the watch, that he might meditate on the word of God: and all the day long he centered his thoughts and studies thereon: he sought the Lord early, and good reason, for he found him his God, the God of his salvation. Now seeing that *Sincerity, Truth, Uprightness, Cleanness, and Purity of heart,* puts the

the soul into such an excellent temper, as to make all our services acceptable, our God well pleased with us, and fills us with so many sweet satisfactions: What disorders and deformities happen to the soul by those dispositions that are quite contrary? How careful then should we be of giving harbour in the least to

Hypocrisie,

Diffimulation, and Falseness of spirit? It hath been already instanced, how deceitful the heart of man is; and no question but every sincere soul doth not only resolve, but struggles hard against the insinuations of that destructive temper, and by experience find that too too often endeavours fall very short therein, through the remains of Original sin, and pride flowing thence, which lurks undiscerned in the inner man: or else how comes it to pass, that for a little disrespect from man, contempt or provocation (though perhaps the outward man may be bridled) yet the heart grows big with passion, being

being smothered, and in a while contracts worse evils; as secret heart-burning, Malice, and the like. Let our own hearts be both judges and witnesses, and they must needs tell us, that we often make an outward calm, when the Sea is troubled within; proceeding from these little swellings of envy, at the advantages of those we do distast, smiling at any evil report that is raised against them; though possibly we our selves believe that these reports are either untrue, or unjust: instance that ill-natured cheerfulness and pleasure that we take, either in beholding, or hearing of their misfortunes. Undoubtedly these kind of dispositions have much of the poyson of the old Serpent in them; but especially when we endeavour to hide them by pretensions of friendship; and so high oftentimes these pretensions fly, that lest we should be mistrusted, we'll venture at protestations. Can there be then a more necessary duty, then to search out this venom? so as that by the antidote of Grace it may be expelled, it being indeed too hard to be conquered by nature: and the more care to be used, because that nothing
more

more hinders communion with Christ, than such Pharisaical Hypocrisie. The Hypocrite is the Devils chief Engineer, and hath an excellent faculty in painting, putting fine colours upon the greatest deformities, that he may hide Pride, Ambition, and Vain-glory in all outward circumstances; he casts a veil over them, which looks in the variety of condescensions and complacencies, very like Humility. Oppression he covers with pretension to exact an impartial justice: Revenge, with brave resolution: Envy, Hatred, and Malice, with fair outside appearances of Love and obliging Civilities: Covetousness, with pretence of provident care; and will often tell you, that they *are worse than Infidels that do not provide for their families*: and would make you believe that he does admire the wisdom of the Creator in that contemptible part of the Universe, even *Solomon's Pismire*. He veils Wantonness, and lascivious behaviour, with Complacence and harmless mirth. Voluptuousness in eating and drinking, with Gods permission of us freely to enjoy his creatures. Anger, and Passion, with zeal for good works, and

1 Tim. 5.
3.

and will excuse his bold and prophane
 asseveration, by telling you that he
 speaks what's in his heart. Laziness
 and indifferencies in holy Duties, with
 a strange confidence of his Election,
 and therefore cannot fall. To the out-
 ward appearance none so pious, in pri-
 vate none more labours to serve their
 own ends as to gain or profit: nay, they
 can sail with any wind, condemning
 that as foul in others, which both to
 God and Man is odious in themselves:
 never minding this great certainty, that
 persons may be instruments in the busi-
 ness of Religion, for the good of o-
 thers, and yet themselves be very little
 the better; as the Apostle well dis-
 courseth, that while he exhorted others,
 he might be himself *a cast-away*. O see 1 Cor. 9.
 then the necessity of searching the 27.
 heart that naturally is so full of wind-
 ings and turnings, and destructive ap-
 pearances instead of realities; while
 that Sincerity, Truth, Uprightness, and
 Purity are neglected. But now which
 way shall we guard our selves against
 those treacherous tempers and dispo-
 sitions which have been but now men-
 tioned? Holy *David* in his divine pra-
 ctices

Etices chalks us out a way ; that is, by a serious and true

Devotion,

endeavours, and labours, strugglings and watchings over our selves. For strong resolutions taken up by our selves, will be but to little purpose, without the sweet operation of Gods over-powering grace upon the spirit. A chief method to the attaining of which, is by earnest, serious and frequent Petitions to the Throne of Grace ; in the holy breathings of *David*, who begg'd of God (as for one of the greatest blessings he could bestow upon him) to *create in him a clean heart, and renew a right spirit in him.* Devotion is, as it were, the soul of every holy duty; Prayer seems to challenge one of the greatest shares in that : but yet we may deceive our selves even in that, if we have not a great care : for it is not every sudden flash that is sufficient to make our services acceptable unto God. In this of Devotion, (so necessary to the performance of what God requires of us)

Psal. 51.
10.

us) the whole man is concerned; the soul by sweet retirements being possess'd with a fervent intentness upon the religious duty 'tis about; and the body evidencing in the decencies of gestures and postures futable to those acts of Religion that the soul is imployed about. True it is, the Soul may be devout in a Market-place, and no notice possibly betaken of it. The Body may seem to manifest great Reverence and Devotion, and the Soul be very little concerned therein; but herein is the beauty of Holiness, when that both Soul and Body either in publick appearances before, and in private addresses to God, they jointly concur. I may possibly be doing so much as appears to Man to have the reputation of a devout person; but I am not therefore to believe my self so, because others take me to be so; for what comfort will that be to me in the day of tryal, when the secret checks of my own guilt will be laid open to my eternal shame and utter ruine? Many do think, that if they cease to do that evil they were formerly addicted to, they are got far enough in the way of Religion; nay,

B 2

possibly

possibly they may have gone farther; that is, not only ceasing to do evil, but to the doing of such things that in themselves are excellently good, and then they please themselves with apprehension that all is well; but we know that leaving off sin is not sufficient, for vain and ill-disposed persons often-times do so, for fear of shame or punishment, or variety of inconveniences, which their own experience tells them that through sin hath happened unto them. And as to the doing of that which in its self is really good: The proud Pharisee could drop Items with a great many that are indeed sincere; but now joyn these two together, departing from evil and doing good, with a settled resolution of striving against all appearance of indevotion, or careless worshipping of God; and that in Obedience to his will; even his will who sees with what zeal we make our addressees to him: then Religion is in its lustre. A striving (I say) a watchfulness and a care in this business must be, because that the best of our Devotions and Performances are full of imperfection, as every good
Christian

Christian finds by a sad experience, that hath cause to say, *that when we have done all that we can do; we are unprofitable servants*: therefore our search must be the more curious after the motions of our souls in the performance of any holy duty that God requires of us. I might instance in many things; but affecting brevity, I shall only instance in few. As that if we were under the afflicting hand of God, we can in a real Devotion humbly kiss the Rod; not opening the mouth in any discontented passion, but with a devout silence (with David) yield to Gods pleasure, which must be the period to any farther enquiry; For, God doth not afflict willingly, as *Lam. 3. 33.* and *Hosea 11. 8.* declares. It was David's way of imploring God to make good his Promise, saying, *Stablish thy Word to thy Servant who is Devoted to thy fear*: for true Devotion is always attended with an holy fear, *working out her salvation with fear and trembling*; for commonly in affliction we are fuller of Devotion, than in prosperity; which makes the world believe, Devotion is nothing but a sullen

Luke 17.
10.
Psal. 119.
38.
Phil. 2. 12.

B 3

passion

passion of Discontent. True Devotion carries an inward joy in being always conversant with God, being confident he hath an ear always open to hear her Petitions, and an eye beholding all her afflictions; a hand held out to save her from sinking in them; a Cordial ever ready to revive her in faintings; holding her fast in his everlasting arms, into which she throws her self for refuge here, and safety in the great day of the appearing of the Lord Jesus.

Deut. 33.
27.

We have in this discourse of Devotion noted, that the proud Pharisee was a great stranger to it, notwithstanding all his prayings and praisings, and visits of the Temple; when as the poor Publican finding in himself few, or none of those things to brag of, was the devout person; from whence easily may be inferred, that

Humility

is a chief and most necessary ingredient to Devotion; and therefore a word or two concerning that lowliness and
con-

contriteness of spirit, which as much as any other grace renders us and our performances acceptable and well-pleasing to God. Humility is a principal vertue that goeth before Honour, Prov. 15. even the greatest, which is to be admitted into the number of Gods favourites, and therefore diligently to be sought after. We read of *Ahab*, a wicked King, that on his humiliation before God, he deferred the judgment from falling on his house in his days. Also the King of *Nineveh* being humbled at the hearing of the judgments pronounced by the Prophet *Jonah*, found so much favour from God, as he reversed the judgment of destroying the whole Land. By humility and fear of the Lord, are riches, honour, and life; the least of these is a strong inducement to make us search our hearts, that we be not deceived herein, for, for want of being humbled under Gods visitations, made the Lord to say, he would set his face against his people for evil. There is a great difference between being humble, and being humbled. *Pharaoh* refusing to humble himself before the Lord when his sore judgments

- Exod. 9.
28. judgments lay on him, was humbled so far, as to desire *Moses* to pray for him, to entreat for him, and to bless him, which yet was but in Hypocrisie, and not in a sincere humiliation, which causeth the destruction of himself and
- 1 Pet. 5. 5. all his people. *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble: for they that humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, shall in due time be exalted.* How did our Saviour humble
- Phil. 2. 8. himself, when he became Obedient even to the death of the Cross! Humbleness
- Col. 3. 12. is one of the garments the Apostle adviseth the Elect to put on, and is the posture we should walk in with God.
- Mich. 6. 8. 'Twas St. Paul's way of serving God, When our Saviour saw the pride of the Pharisees, in choosing the chief places at the meetings, he gave them this admonition, *He that exalteth himself shall be abased; and the rather to make them shun it, he saith, And they that humble themselves shall be exalted.* The Lord hath two habitations, the highest Heavens, and the humble heart. This made the blessed Virgin to say,
- Luke 1.
14. *My soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoyce in God my Saviour;*
46, 47, 48. *for*

for he had respect unto the low estate of his hand-maid. A truly humbled heart, will abase its self under the sense of its own vileness: and in consideration of Gods infinite condescension to lay down his life for us, which was the greatest character of love, and humility that could be shown, for which we should labour highly to extol his praise, and that in word and deed, in truth and affection, with all the powers of the outward and inward man. Therefore there ought to be a diligent eye, to search whether our humility will be such as will abide the tryal. In this brief reflection on this excellent grace of humility, an honourable mention hath been made of the poor Publican, that looked upon himself to be one of the vilest persons that could pretend to mercy; but we find that he went away rather justified, than he that made such a flourish with his performances. But how did this person poor in spirit, but rich in grace, make out that he had that vertue of Humility and lowliness of spirit, that is (as hath been said) so acceptable unto God, but chiefly by

Confession;

Confession ;

begging Gods mercy, acknowledging
 Psal. 77. 6. himself to be a miserable sinner. *Da-
 vid* (as hath been before mentioned)
 while he was diligent in Communing
 with his God, and in the search of his
 own spirit ; it came to this issue, that
 he durst not make his addresses to
 God for his Protection, unless he had
 search'd out his sins, and poured out
 his soul by an humble confession and
 acknowledgment, with a resolution of
 perfect detestation and dereliction of
 them, without which we find in holy
 Writ, it hath afforded little advantage.
Cain acknowledgeth his sin, *Saul* was
 not backward, *Judas* very remarkable
 therein, yet reaped no profit thereby.
 How necessary is it then in order to
 that, to put our selves upon search of the
 holy Scriptures, wherein, as in a Glass,
 we may see our deformities and foul-
 nesses ; and are directed to wash away
 these stains, with humble and penitent
 tears ? Those holy Scriptures (I say)
 which are of such singular use for all
 concerns ;

concerns; for *holy doctrine* to make us *2 Tim. 3.*
 understand them; for *reproof* of our ways *16.*
 subject to Errors; for *correction* of
 our rebellious lusts by Gods judgments
 on others; for *instruction* of our igno-
 rance in matters of Salvation, *through-* *17.*
ly to furnish us to every good work, that
 so we may be perfect in God. This
 was David's confidence which made
 him so bold, to say, *Search me O God*, *Psal. 139.*
try and know my heart; not that David *23.*
 thought himself free from sin; for we see
 his own acknowledgment in *Psal. 51. 3.*
 He saith, there was no rest in his bones
 by reason of his sins, which were too
 heavy for him to bear; his iniquity
 made him roar; but upon search of
 his own heart by the light of Gods
 Word, he found this gracious answer;
He that confesseth his sins with a broken
and contrite spirit, and forsaketh them,
shall find mercy. The diligent search
 of every ones condition requires no lit-
 tle pains; for there are so many va-
 rieties of sins contracted in the heart of
 man, as are not quickly to be found
 out. The lusts of the flesh rage hor-
 ribly, and their off-spring branch them-
 selves into multitudes of inconveni-
 encies.

cies. The Devil perpetually shooting Arrows of filthy suggestions. The world incircling with innumerable vanities, so that unless he that led Captivity Captive, the strong Lion of the Tribe of Judah, stand up for our defence, we must perish irremediably. Here not improperly we may make some reflections upon that excellent grace of

Faith,

which as a Load-stone draws vertue to it, and then like the Sun darts her beams to refresh the several Plants growing in her Garden; with an eye lift up to Heaven to fetch Knowledge, Temperance, Patience, Godliness, Brotherly kindness and Charity to unite with her; for as it is said, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*; so faith without it be evidenced by good works, is dead. And though a secret faith can suck life and comfort from Christ, without boasting like the Pharisee, yet it's necessary there should be a confident manifestation thereof, with Saint Paul, who saith, *I know whom I have believed:*

believed : for as the light hid under a cover adds no advantage to others, so faith which discovers not her graces by Repentance, Patience, Charity, Thankfulness, &c. comes short of a true Faith; these being the sprigs that grow out of the root of Faith. But a true Faith hath the evidence of the holy Spirit within its self by unfeigned desires after Christ, and by striving against doubtings; yet with an humble fear of that Text : *Be not high-minded, but let him that standeth take heed lest he fall*; and therefore sets about the business of working out salvation with fear and trembling; not through despair, for true Faith hath her eye fix'd on the Promises of her God, which are the foundation of eternal happiness, sealing joy in the heart by the peace of our Consciences, in a feeling of our Regeneration by the Spirits working on our hearts Purification, Sanctification, Justification and Adoption.

Much more might be said of this principal vertue and saving grace Faith, but it shall be referred to the conclusion of this Miscellaneous Essay, where it must

must necessarily be discoursed of when we come to speak (God willing) of the profitable use of the blessed Sacraments. In this place therefore we shall slide into as profitable a consideration of

Hope,

indubitably necessary to attend on a true Faith; therefore we ought to search what our hope in God is; whether grounded aright; whether such as Rom. 5. 5. *makes not ashamed* in the day of trial. As amongst Jewels, there are such that are very like true ones, and often deceive the wearer, being counterfeit; so as to graces there are some dispositions that proportionably carry a like deceiving resemblance. We have heard that even the Hypocrite hath an hope that perisheth; and on the other hand we find that even sincere persons brought to such a stand in this respect, as to say with David, that their feet Psal. 73. 2. *had well nigh slipt*; but yet even then in a posture of recovery, while their graces have been but as living coals covered over

over with dust and ashes. That upright *Job* had like to have split upon that Rock of distrust; while in a mourning manner he complains, that his days *Job 7. 6;* were spent without Hope; and that his trust was but as a Spiders web; or as *3. 14.* the giving up the ghost. Others dangers should make us beware: and let us make enquiry after *David's* hope, *Psal. 16. 5,* who set the Lord always before him; *11.* therefore his heart rejoyced, and his flesh rested in hope; for in Gods presence he knew there was fulness of joy, and that for ever. But why did *Job* *Job 19.* make this sad complaint, seeing his *25, 26, 27.* faith carried him above hope, he being assured he should see God in his flesh? God many times suffers his children to fall, that they may take better heed to their ways, and thereby stick the closer to him; for the eyes of the *Psal. 33.* Lord are upon them that hope in his mercy, *18, 19.* to deliver their soul from death. It was a sweet hope which *David* had, when he said, he waited upon God, his hope was, he would deliver him from all his transgressions. This made him bold to cast himself upon the Lord, and with patience to wait upon him, who;

Prov. 14. who only in time of adversity knew how
 32. to deliver his people. *The Righteous hath*
 Jer. 17.7. *hope in death, and happy is that soul whose*
hope the Lord is.

In a Storm at Sea when a Ship approacheth to Land, where indeed she should expect the safety of her Harbour, into how many distractions are the company that are within her forced, when they do perceive that nothing but inevitable ruine waits upon them, while they approach to such ends that can neither entreat for them, nor advance towards them (I mean the Rocks) the sight of which puts them almost to their wits end; what's their next refuge, but only to cast out Anchor, which if it happen to fall in a firm soil, their fears, their terrors, their confusions begin to vanish; and notwithstanding the Sea be boisterous, the Winds ruffling, perchance the Ship leaking; by degrees there steals upon them great measures of satisfaction, and contentment with the condition they are in, and so in a like nature from that well-grounded hope before mentioned, proceeds that excellent grace of

Content,

Content,

which comes not in the reere of these spiritual adornments that the Gospel recommends unto us; for as the covetous like the Horse-leach cries, *Give, Give*, Prov. 30. 15. so the contented person can be abased without repining, and can abound without being puffed up. This conforms us most to Christ, and manifests our faith in him, from whom we have not only our being by nature, but our blessed being from his grace. Therefore we ought more curiously to search, what ground of comfort we have by conquering our covetous lusts, our Pride, and Passions, which are sooner subdued by meekness and gentleness, by a silent penitential mourning for sin, than by a furious short fiery Zeal, which consumes suddenly into nothing; wanting Content to wait Gods pleasure for our relief: for if Gods chosen *St. Paul* lay under Satan's buffetings, without comfort, though he besought the Lord again, and again; can we expect to have our weak Petitions answered al-

C

soon

Joh. 21.
15. 16.

soon as offered? Not so; for great mercies must be long waited for. The *Messiah* was promised thousands of years, before manifested in the World; for 'tis the way our great Master deals with his servants, to exercise their Faith and Patience, whether they will hold out to the end. We see how soon *Peter's* confident presumption was quelled with the word of a silly Maid, and what mercy he found by his humble submission, when his Master said, *Peter lovest thou me?* three times; which question so wounded him, for his three times denial, that he endeavours not to excuse his faults, but meekly yields himself to Gods knowledge of his heart; and upon this appeal, we see the gracious answer of a satisfied Master, he gives him charge of his Lambs. Nothing more satisfies the wrath of an offended Majesty, than a real confession under the sense of our own guilt and unworthiness, as we find by *David*, who being reprov'd, was convicted in his own conscience, which drew forth this passionate pathetic confession, as you may find in the 51. *Psalms*, which no sooner was acknowledged,

ledged, but God sealed his discharge with this gracious answer, his sins were pardoned, or put away; upon which how did the storm of his afflicted Conscience abate, and the sweet calm of Peace revive his drooping spirit! I am not ignorant that this Grace of Content bears relation to all our concerns, both spiritual and temporal; and that consideration in a larger discourse might unfold that riddle, that the best Christians, are the most satisfied, and the most dissatisfied persons on this side Heaven. To be dissatisfied in some respect, tends to the greatest satisfaction; or else what mean those calls, from the Word of God, to hungriings and thirstings, and pantings, as evidences of Sanctification? The object makes the difference, and the common usage both of the word and notion of Content, makes the Object of it to be our outward condition, accompanied with cross accidents, not very pleasing to flesh and blood; as sicknesses, losses, vexations, relations, disappointments, dangers, with a multitude of other things which are troublesome to that infirm creature called Man. I might

C 2 largely

largely expatiate upon this account of it. That it is the work of Gods gracious Spirit upon the heart of a sincere Christian; it makes him quiet, still, and gentle, while he reflects upon Gods dealings with him, thence resolving to remain satisfied with what he enjoins, whether it be little, or more of the things of this life: and is humbly submissive under all kinds of distresses or

2 Tim. 6. 6,
7, 8.

afflictions; minding this, that he *brought nothing into this world, and it is certain he can carry nothing out.* He considers likewise that little else but misery is left by our Father *Adam*; and yet those miseries and afflictions through Gods blessing turn to very good account; or else *David* had never said, *'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted:* but that which gives him the most satisfaction, is, that whatever happens is but the fruit of sin, which he hopes through *Jesus Christ* is pardoned, and therefore in his soul speaks that language of the Prophet *Micah*, *I will bear the anger of the Lord, because I have sinned; I will bear it patiently, submissively, and contentedly without murmuring.* Yet notwithstanding there is spiritual
reason

Mic. 7. 9.

reason sufficient, for such firm purposes; how often have strong resolutions been baffled by the assaults of other kinds of tempers, that either insensibly, or at unawares take place in the heart of frail and fickle man? One of the worst I apprehend to be

Covetousness;

concerning which I will not discourse, as it may be extended to all unlawful and irregular desires of that which we have not in our possession, but confine it in brief to that love of money, which (the Apostle saith) is the root of all evil. By money I do not mean those Counters (of Gain and Industry, or possibly of that) that even little children please themselves either with the sight or handling of them; but money or moneys worth, I understand to be of the same acceptation, and so the love of money is the same thing with the love of Substance, and that which the world calls Wealth, or Treasure, which greedy-minded men struggle to have a share in, whether it be by right,

1 Tim. 6.
10.

or whether it be by wrong. After that the Apostle had pronounced that sentence upon that false love, you may see the grounds of his severity, if you peruse the account of the fruits of it; from thence proceeding Idolatry, Gal. 5. 20. proud Boasting, Blasphemy, Disobedience, &c. Isa. 57. 17. Covetousness made the Lord offended and smote his people, it being forbidden by his own special command. And the wise King saith, Pro. 28. 16. *He that hateth Covetousness shall prolong his days.* St. Paul's charge to the Hebrews was, that their conversation should be without Covetousness; and good reason he gives for it, for (saith he) Heb. 13. 5. *I will not leave thee, nor forsake thee:* and surely they are unworthy his mercy, that will not rely on his promise, which he seconds with this encouragement, They that seek the Kingdom of Heaven and the Righteousness thereof, shall have all other things added unto them. O the sad effects of Covetousness! We may read it in Judas. A covetous heart feeds only on husks, empty chaff which affords no true nourishment; for whilst they labour to grasp the things of this life, which cannot

cannot profit in the day of Adversity, they lose the opportunity of gathering those fruits that nourish the soul to life eternal; for nothing corporal can satisfy a spiritual heart. The charge against the Covetous will be greater for not doing good, than for doing ill; as we find by the fruitless Figg-tree, the curse on it was not for bearing bad fruit; but for bearing no fruit. The covetous person enjoyeth nothing, though he possess all that his heart can desire; the worm of Envy against any thing that is anothers, eats out his gratitude for all that he hath of his own. Covetousness banisheth Charity and Friendship, as we find by *Nabals* requital to *David*, who had been both charitable and friendly. Neither was the charge against those our Saviour dismiss'd with a curse for evil committed, but for good omitted. The consideration of the great evil which sprang from this vice (it being the root of all wickedness) made *David* so earnestly pray God to incline his heart to his testimonies, but to be delivered from Covetousness: he well understood it was a breach of Gods command-

Psal. 50.
16, 17.

mandments, and therefore liable to eternal death. Gods commands are tender to every good Christian, in regard the neglect thereof is a high provocation of the wrath of God, which caused that question, *What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee?* How diligent therefore should our search be to find out that root of bitterness, which distasts the relish of heavenly sweetness, and seeking the treasures of Eternity? and not dig like the Mole in the dirty Earth for perishing unsatisfying toys. There is nothing that more disturbs and disquiets any mans soul, then to have taken a great deal of pains and wearied his spirits in the pursuit of something he thought desirable, but at last is either frustrated of that which he aimed at, or when he comes to be possesst of it, he finds it not at all answerable to the labours he hath bestowed in the attaining of it; thence flows that thing called Discontent, that so disturbs and disorders the whole man. He therefore that avoids Coverousness, hath well consulted the

the tranquillity of his mind; but yet this is not all that goes to a quiet, calm and serene spirit; for there is not a grace nor duty (that one entertained, and the other performed) but contributes much to it. It would be large to run through the Catalogue either of Graces or Duties; but in my opinion,

Meekness

is one of the chiefest; for God hath Psal. 35. 9. promised to guide in judgement the meek, and to teach the humble his way. The happiness that doth attend a meek spirit, would put any, that love their souls, upon the search, what portion they have of that excellent grace; for who would not be like our Saviour? and he tells us that Mat. 11. 28, 29. he is meek and lowly, and bids us learn of him, and we should find rest to our souls; a mercy that the forward can never expect; for they are Isa. 57. 20. like the raging Sea which casts up nothing but mire and dirt, provoking language, or catching at unjust exceptions,

- tions, Meekness hath a blessing in life
 Mat. 5. 5. and death. Our Saviour in his Ser-
 mon said, they should inherit the
 Zeph. 2. 3. Earth. And the Prophet bids, *Seek ye the
 Lord all ye that are meek, for they shall
 be hid in the day of the Lords anger.* The
 Mat. 21. 5. Lord tells the daughters of Sion, that
 their King comes unto them meek. The
 1. Pet. 3. 4. meek spirit in Gods sight is of great
 price; and he will make the meek
 glorious. Meekness is very necessary
 in all cases, as the Apostle sheweth.
 Gal. 6. 1. If we reprove, it must be with Meek-
 Jam. 1. 21. ness. If we hear, it must be with
 Meekness. If we entreat, it must be
 2 Cor. 10. with Meekness. If we are required to
 1. answer the hope we have in Christ,
 we must do it with Meekness. We
 must put on Meekness as a garment,
 and wear it as an ornament of great
 value; for in the greatest storm of
 Passion she is in a calm, and minds
 Kings 19. that Scripture; *The Lord was not in
 11. 12. the wind, (of wild fury) nor in the Earth-
 quake (of a wavering mind) nor in the
 fire (of inconsiderate rashness) as those
 whom our Saviour reprov'd; saying;
 Lu. 9. 55. Ye know not what spirit ye are of: but
 when the still small voice came, in that
 was*

was the Lord. We find how pleasing Peace was to our Saviour; the same respect he hath of Meekness, for she is the Kings daughter also, and she knows how distastful a turbulent spirit is to her heavenly Father; for it provokes unto wrath, than which nothing is more contrary to God; but Meekness is like him that hath done all things well. Truth, Righteousness and Meekness wait all on him whose commands are pure, and his statutes right, and rejoyce the heart. But the contrary to this excellent grace that hath been mentioned, instead of rejoycing the heart, how much doth it discompose the soul in all it's motions! and that is

Frowardness.

A Froward heart is one of the saddest evils that can possess any one, it being an abomination to the Lord, which *Pro. 13.* made David to say, *A froward heart* ^{32.} *shall depart from me; for he remem-* ^{Pla. 101. 4.} *bred Job's saying; the counsel of the fro-* ^{Job. 3. 13.} *ward is carried head-long. The Lord saith,*
He

- He *hates a froward mouth*; and the wise King saith, *The froward tongue shall be cut out*; for, it soweth strife; and a whisper separateth chief friends. A froward heart findeth no good, and a perverse tongue falleth into mischief, thorns and snares are in their ways; they rejoice to do wickedly, and delight to do evil. And can there be a more necessary duty, then to search the heart, to have it purged from this dangerous malady, which is so hateful to God and dangerous to man? We read, *When a mans ways please the Lord, he will make his enemies to be at peace with him*; and as the Lord saith, by the prophet *Isaiah*, *There is no peace to the wicked*; so may it be justly said, there is no peace to the froward. Solomon adviseth this; *Make no friendship with an angry man*; have nothing to do with a froward man; for they shoot forth arrows (bitter words) and their tongues are a sharp sword. And as Jacob said (in another sense) *the instruments of cruelty are in their habitations*; into their secrets let not my soul come; so let every good soul labour for the sword of Gods Spirit to destroy this soul-disturbing enemy. Now
one
- Prov. 8. 13.
10. 31.
16. 28.
17. 20.
22. 5.
Prov. 16. 7.
Isa. 57. 21.
Prov. 22.
24.
Psal. 57. 4.
Gen. 49.
5, 6.

one principal way to quiet the spirit of man of that disturbing temper of Frowardness, and to get the spirit possessed with that blessed temper of Meekness, is to study all the methods imaginable how to live at

Peace

with all men. Peace and Peace-make-
 ing carry a blessedness along with them. *Mat. 5. 9.*
 God entitles himself a God of Peace; *Isa. 9. 6.*
 and that we may be like unto him, *1 Thes. 5.*
 he enjoyns us by *St. Paul*, to keep it *13. 23.*
 among our selves. *The God of Peace* *Joh. 14.*
sanctifie you throughout. It ought to be *27.*
 our chiefest enquiry; seeing it was
 Gods Legacy to his Apostles at his
 farewell. *St. Peter* adviseth us to be
found of God in Peace, when he shall *2 Pet. 3.*
 come to enquire, how we have valued *14.*
 his Leagacy; you see what her asso-
 ciates are, Righteousness, Faith, and *2 Tim 2.*
 Charity. *St. Paul* putteth a very high *22.*
 value on it, for, he saith it *passeth all* *Phil. 4. 7.*
understanding: you may see the sad
 effects of the want of it, *Rev. 6. 4.* And
 the sore judgments which ensue when
 God

God taketh his Peace from the Earth:

r. 16. 5. Peace is the fruit of Righteousness, and shall be given to them that make

Jam. 3. 18. Peace; and to them that seek it and ensue it, God promiserh Peace in his house; and to his Priests that walked uprightly, he made a Covenant of life and Peace. And to them that walk with God in Peace and Equity, will he give the law of truth, and iniquity shall not be found in their lips; so precious is the blessing of Peace!

Zech. 18. 16. God commands to execute it with judgment, and truth in our gates, as if

10. that did allay the rigor of judgment, and establish truth; for where Peace is wanting, there is no safety to him that

Luk. 10. 5. 6. goeth out, or cometh in, but sore afflictions. Peace is God's Harbinger;

for when Christ sent forth the seventy Disciples, where himself intended to come, he offers conditions of it, but if they refuse, *Sodom* and *Gomorrha's* judgments will not be so heavy as theirs; for Peace is one of those sweet Harmonies, which made the whole multitude of Disciples triumph with joy, saying, Blessed is the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, Peace

Luk. 19. 38.

in

in Heaven, and Glory in the highest ;
and hath a singular vertue to allay a
turbulent spirit. But seeing that the
vertue of meekness cannot be exercised,
nor frowardness avoided, nor Peace
amongst men, and with our selves ob-
tained ; unless our minds are furnished
with

Patience

against all adversities and sad accidents
or crosses ; it will not be amiss to speak
of that singular vertue, which is of
that excellent quality, as it hath know-
ledge of the mercy and goodness of
God, which builds up her confidence
by faith in the Lord, without diffi-
dence under afflictions, not sueing for
relief from them, nor murmuring at
them, but meekly submits to it in all
Obedience, supported with love and
fear, which in all events will calm
risings of heart, and with old *Ely* say ;
*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth
him good :* For a patient spirit knows,
God doth not afflict willingly ; our
rebellious dispositions force him to
strike ;

strike; which when he doth, 'tis for our amendment, lest we perish in our own lusts: and therefore sweet is the fruit that springs from the root of Patience; if sickness, happy is he that can present God with *Hezekiah's* memento, of walking before God with a perfect heart. If *Job's* afflictions like a flood overflow, happy are they that can in the height thereof say, *Blessed be the name of the Lord*. This made the Apostle give in his charge, Let Patience possess your souls; and when tribulation worketh Patience, we have the experience of Gods love: for he will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will rather enable us to bear it, or make way for our escape. The *Thessalonians* Patience in their tribulations was *St. Paul's* glory; for if Patience have her perfect work, he is compleat, and wanteth nothing. The Apostle saith, be patient towards all; for the patient waiting on God shall not always be forgotten; but when the Lords book of remembrance shall be brought before him, he will pronounce they shall be his, when he makes up his jewels: and he

he will spare them, as a man spareth his son which serveth him. But all that hath already been said, as to the getting into our souls an esteem to the Word of God; and from thence to learn such lessons that direct us to put forth out utmost strength and endeavour after sincerity, devotion, humility, meekness, peace and patience, with avoiding the contrary to these, hath been but beating the air; unless these endeavours proceed from

A true love unto God,

which indeed as to all soul-concernments, is as the Rudder to the Ship, whatever the burthen, or Cargo may be. If any particular soul were asked the question, (as once *S. Peter* was asked) *Lovest thou me?* Can we make his answer, *Lord, thou knowest I love thee?* *Joh. 21.* and answer *Moses* command, to love *16.* God so as to serve him with all the heart, *Deut. 10.* and with all the soul? And can you so *13.* love him, as to make him your portion, *Psal. 119.* with *David*; and with the Spouse, your *57.* chiefest good? Can you in love to *Cant. 5.* God, *10.*

Mat. 5.
44, 45.

God, be content to lay down your life, if you are called thereto in the Name of the Lord Jesus? Canst thou so love God, as to love thy very enemies for his sake, and to fulfil the command of Christ, our chiefeft evidence that we are the children of our heavenly Father? Can we so love him, as to make it our perpetual practice to suppress and mortifie our vile affections, carnal lusts, and inordinate passions? which opens a gap to all impiety, and permits the deadly Hunter to range there with all his hellish Hounds in couples; Fury and Revenge, Envy and Malice, Hatred and Backbiting, Dissimulation and Treachery, Hypocrisie and Vain-glory, &c. Of all which we ought to search our hearts; for the Lord saith by the Prophet, that he would *search Jerusalem with a Candle, to find out and punish those that are settled on their lees.*

Zeph. I.
12.

But how shall we evidence this love unto God that hath been mentioned? In a manner by way of similitude; as we do shew our love and respects to those to whom they are due, by our visiting of their houses, eating at their tables, accepting of their counsels and advice,
and

and the like : Much what in the same manner do we shew our love to God. Holy *David* invites all that are ready to *Psal. 34. 8.* follow the guidance of Gods Spirit, to come into his Sanctuary, and taste and see how good the Lord is : so that one of the greatest evidences of our love to God, is our

Love to Gods House and Ordinances.

'Twas *David's* great desire to be, and *Psal. 11. 4* as great a trouble it was to him to be deprived of opportunity of waiting upon God in his house : for there he did assure himself, that he should find his presence in the holy solemnities thereof : for the Lord promised, his eyes and his ears should be there perpetually ; therefore *David* would with *Jacob* wrestle for a blessing. And so should every true servant of God, delight with him to haste to the house of the Lord, to breath forth humble confession, with bitter myrrh of true contrition for past sins, with the incense of a thankful heart

for blessings received, with devout supplication for preventing grace in time to come, as well as pardoning mercy for all past transgressions. There they will wait for the holy waters that flow from the sanctuary, to allay the heat of violent and unbridled passions, and quench the thirst of envy, and satisfy the humour of Covetousness, (I mean in those methods shall be a way of receiving what heart and soul can wish or desire, and that in goods real, and not appearing only) and heal all their infirmities: for every thing shall live where this River cometh. There they will wait for the Bridegroom, to receive the Wedding-garment of a sanctified soul. There the Spouse expects her Beloved, to be betrothed by Sacramental Grace. There is the Marriage-supper of the Kings Son. There is the Feast of Fat things, and of Wine to revive the drooping spirit. O therefore lose no opportunity to be one with *David*! *Dwell in the house of the Lord, and enquire in his temple, what thy interest is there; for we find Jacob said, The house of the Lord was dreadful, for the Lord was there, though he was not aware of it.*

This

Ezek. 47.

9.

Psal. 27. 4.

Gen. 28.

16, 17.

This made David say, *Come, let us worship,* Psal. 95. 6. *fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker,* for his way is in the Sanctuary; therefore *stand in awe and sin not,* for the Lord hath pure eyes, and cannot behold iniquity. Therefore farther search we ought to make of the sincerity of our hearts to God and his service, whether out of ostentation or integrity? whether not more for fear of punishment, then filial obedience to his commands? for it's not to be questioned, but that there are many good souls who desire to fulfil the end of their Creation, to serve God, Deut. 6. 13 and fear him as he hath commanded: for he doth require of thee to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him; also to fear him, and keep his commands, which the Preacher tells us, is the whole duty of man. Eccles. 12. But all these are still in relation to our own good; the omission of which will cry louder for vengeance, then all our performances for pardon. From hence we may gather, there ought to be a curious search of our affections to the house of the Lord, and the services thereof; whether we have not made a mixed garment of our affections with the services of God, which is abominable

in his eyes. Herein I do suppose many souls must have a damp upon their spirits, when calling themselves to account, they shall find their own lusts, vanity, covetousness, prophaneness, and vain glory, &c. often carried them there, which yet have been guilded over with pretence of Zeal for Gods service. Here methinks I find a secret answer arising from the sense of my own guilt herein, which forceth me with *David* to say,

Plal. 19. 12. Lord, who can understand his errours? cleanse me from my secret faults: for

Job 42. 6. (with Job) I do abhor my self. We cannot deny, but that God hath sent many servants, of his grace, by holy inspiration, to invite our return from our vain courses unto God, by true repentance, and yet we have stifled these holy motions, not suffering them to breathe out one sigh for us, or thanks for them. As

Plal. 145. 9. God's mercies are over all his works; so his Name is to be praised from the rising of the Sun, to the going down thereof; which we may truly construe it to be, from the beginning of our life, to the period of the same. But now in regard that our love to God is principally shown by a love to his House, and the

Ordi-

Ordinances thereof ; we may begin to question, How we shall manifest that love ? for the house of Prayer hath of late been very much slighted, and the Ordinances thereof equally neglected. 'Tis not for me to quarrel with any concerning their difference in judgments, which they have taken up, and seem eagerly to vindicate, every one according to his own way : But this I know, that besides these common entertainments in God's House, as Confession of Sin, Profession of Faith, Prayer to God, Praises of his holy Name, Discoveries of the mind of God ; with the sweet methods directed for the supply of the spiritual necessities of those that cannot by reason of infirmities wait on these things in the Publick : the chiefest of these mysterious methods of joyning God to man, and man to God, are these two great Sacraments, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord : the outward part of either of these Solemnities, seems mean and despicable ; but the inward full of mystery and wonder, which only the wise God can discover, to the comfort of his people. To whose great and glorious Name, be everlasting

Praise, Glory, Wisdom and Thanksgiving, ascribed by Men and Angels, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Blessing on the subject of this Book.

The Word
of God.

Joh. 1. 1,
14.

Sincerity.

Phil. 1. 10.

Hypocri-
sie.

Mar. 23.
13, 14, 15.

HOly Lord God, who in the beginning wert the Word, for the Word was with God, and that Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, so instruct us therein: O let the wonderful operation thereof, so powerfully work on my heart, as it may break open the gates of the inner man, and cast down the strong holds of sin and Satan, that the new man may be built up in me, in all sincerity and truth; which (as thy holy Word saith) will preserve me without offence to the day of the Lord: For all formal profession without this grace, is of no value, nor better then gilded hypocrisie; against which sin thou dost pronounce a sad wo, Hypocrites being ranked amongst the damned. O thou therefore that canst

canst do what thou pleasest, vouchsafe to
 purge out of my heart all the leaven of hy- Luk. 12.
 pocrisie; it being so abominable to thee, and 1.
 dangerous to me: and plant in the stead
 thereof, the spirit of pure Devotion, which Devotion.
 is in thy sight very precious, as I find by Cor- Acts 10.4.
 nelius, and many devout persons recorded
 in thy holy Word: For true Devotion is ac-
 companied with the fear of thee, O God,
 and is carried upon the wings of a Seraphim.
 Therefore, gracious Lord, deny me not a
 portion thereof sufficient for me: As also
 the grace of Humility, which thou hast Humility.
 commanded me to learn of thee, whose dwel- Mar. 11.
 ling is with the humble spirit. O dear 29.
 Lord, make me to be so happy as to enter- Mai. 57.15
 tain thee; and let thy grace purifie my heart,
 that I may become vile in my own eyes:
 whereof I beseech thee make me sensi-
 ble, by a real search of my own soul, so
 as it may bring me to an humble confession Confession
 of my sins, to which thou hast promised re- 1 Joh. 1.9.
 mission. And I beseech thee, O Lord, shew
 me the like mercy that thou didst to thy ser-
 vant David, whose intention to confess his Psal. 32.5.
 sins, afforded him so much comfort, as he
 obtained the pardon of them. O let thy
 Holy Spirit work effectually in my soul, on
 the confession of my sin; which being accom-
 panied

- panied with true faith, doth never miscarry.
- Faith.** Great Lord, seeing Faith is thy gift, for thy infinite mercies sake, deny me not that, which of my self I cannot have : therefore I pray
- Luk 17.5.** (with the Apostle) Lord, increase my faith,
- & 21.32.** and pray for me, that my faith fail not, nor
- Hope.** my Hope be cut off, who have made thee my hope from my youth ; yea, my hope is in thy
- Rom. 5.5.** Word, and that hope makes not ashamed. Pour thy Love into my heart by thy holy Spi-
- 1 Tim. 6 6.** rit, which with godliness is great gain. And
- Covetous-** as thou dost command to beware of cove-
- ness.** tiousness, which is an Idolatrous sin ; so, O
- Luk. 12.** Lord, I implore thee dispossess my heart of
- 15.** that enemy, and fix in the place thereof the
- Meekness.** spirit of meekness, which thou hast com-
- Mat. 11.** manded me to learn of thee, it being the way
- 29.** to allay the turbulent passions of a covetous mind. O Lord, thou hast said, thou wilt
- Psal. 149.** lift up the meek, and beautifie them with
- 4.** salvation. Oh ! blessed encouragement to
- Froward-** suppress a froward heart, which is so abo-
- ness.** minable in thy sight. Make me with Da-
- Prov. 3.32** vid to banish from me a froward heart, be-
- Psal. 101.** cause thou dost hate it ; and thy Word saith,
- 4.** The froward tongue shall be cut out, for it
- Prov 8.13** soweth strife, and deviseth wicked things,
- Peace.** and is an enemy to peace, which is the blessing
- Psal. 29.** thou hast promised thy people : and seeing thou
- 11.** hast

hast commanded, not onely to seek peace, but Isai. 45. 7.
 also to ensue it, (it being thy own workman- & 9. 6.
 ship) therefore Father and Prince of peace,
 bestow that blessing on me, that humbly sue
 thy grace for it: And also Patience, for they Patience.
 being born together, cannot live from each o-
 ther, of which thou hast by thy holy Apostle
 charged, that she may have her perfect Jam. 1. 4.
 work; which made him so earnestly pray,
 The God of patience grant us to be like Rom. 15. 5
 minded, thereby to glorify thee, whose love Prov. 10.
 covereth all sins: for in thy peoples affli- 12.
 ction, thou wert afflicted, in love and pity thou Isai. 63. 9.
 hast redeemed them: therefore grant me Love unto
 grace (with the Psalmist) really to love God.
 thee, O Lord, and to have a care not to for- Psal. 103.
 get thy benefits. Let me love thee with all my 2.
 heart and soul; let me love thy Name, for Deut. 10.
 they shall dwell in Sion that love it. O let 12.
 me with David love thy house, for thou hast Psal. 69.
 placed thy Name there; and the Ordinances 36.
 thereof, for they shall be thy people. And there- Love to
 fore let me with Peter labour to say, Lord, Gods
 thou knowest I love thee; & with St. Paul, house and
 in answer to thy love, be ready, not onely to be Ordinan-
 bound, but also to die for the love of thee, O ces.
 Jesu; to whom with the Father and blessed 2 Chron.
 Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all glory, ho- 20. 9.
 nour, laud and praise, now and for evermore. Ezek. 11.
 Amen. 20.
A 13.



A
DISCOURSE
OF

The Lamb of God,
And His Satisfaction for Us.

GOd in the beginning made all things by the power of his Word : but when he made Man, he consulted with his highest Wisdom ; Man being a more excellent work then all Creatures below the blessed Angels. As to his framing , there was not a bare [*Let it be so,*] but *Let us make Man after our own Image.* *Let us,* relates to the calling of a Council of the Trinity, in order to this admirable production: and the issue of that great Council was, That Man was made after Gods own Image, in Eph. 4. 24. righteousness and true holiness ; that God gave

gave him power over all his other Creatures, and indeed invested him with so many priviledges, that the greatest danger he was in, was in being too happy, while it was in his choice either to keep himself in, or thrust himself from that blessed condition. But no sooner was man instated in his authority, but he turned Rebel to his Lords command; and so lost not onely his priviledges, but became liable to everlasting destruction. In which deplorable condition, the members of the Heavenly Parliament, held a new Consultation, how to redeem Lost Man. To which purpose there were members (*Justice and Truth, Mercy and Charity*) sent down to hear, and determine, how to accomplish that great work. *Justice* pleads, her Law must be executed, seeing God himself said, *The soul that sinneth shall die; for God the Judge of all the earth must needs do right; for Justice was one of the pillars of his Throne. Mercy* replies, her Office must not decay, for his mercy endureth for ever. *Justice* replied, That *Phineas* by executing justice, appeased the wrath of the Lord, and staid the Plague from destroying the People; for true and righteous are

Ezek. 18.

4.

Gen. 18.

25.

Psal. 136.

Numb. 25.

11.

Rev. 16. 7.

are his judgements, and his Word. *Mercy* Joel 2.13.
answers, *The Lord is slow to anger, and of* Exod.34.
great mercy, forgiving iniquity and sin, and 7.
his mercies are over all his works. *Justice* Psal. 145.
replies, Though his mercies are over all 9.
his works, yet will he not make the wicked Num.14.
innocent, but the doers of the Law shall be 18.
justified. *Mercy* replies, The Lord Pa- Rom.2.13
ramount of Heaven hath said, *I will have* Exod.33.
mercy on whom I will have mercy; and they 19.
shall have judgement without mercy, that Jam.2.13.
will shew no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth a- 2 Cor.1.3.
gainst judgement. God is the Father of
mercy; and he hath said, *Mercy shall be* Psal.89.2.
built up for ever. Then spake Truth, and
said, *Justice carried not the Sword in vain.* Rom.13.4
To which *Charity* replied, God hath
discovered himself to be merciful and Exod.34.
gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in 6.
goodness and truth.

In all this pleading, there appeared but little comfort for the recovery of Lost Man: whereupon considering the weightiness of the affair, the Result was, *Mercy* must stop the Sword of *Justice*, till a spotless Sacrifice might be found to expiate the guilt of Fallen Man, and to be a Propitiation for his crime.

To

To this Proposal they agreed: whereupon *Charity* with *Truth* began their journey; whereafter much search, and a long and tedious way, they heard a voice, to which they listned; and forthwith appeared an innocent Lamb come skipping from Mount *Sion*: the voice was not of bleating through fear, but of resolution, with love, saying, *Lo, I come*, having this Motto graven on his breast,

Psal. 40. 7. Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. With fear and wonder, *Charity* and *Truth* rejoiced at this sight, and addressed themselves to the Lamb, who put himself into their company, and with much satisfaction returned to their fellows, the innocent Lamb going with them: which, when coming together, the difference was again laid open before the Lamb, where *Justice* stood up and said, The great Judge of Heaven, whose *Throne* is established in righteousness, hath said, *The soul that sinneth shall die*, and his word must stand, for

Prov. 16. 12. it is Yea and Amen. *Truth* calls for satisfaction on *Justice* side: to which *Charity* replied, There is a Text, *Be not just overmuch, nor too severe when thou judgest*: for the Lord himself hath pronounced,

He

He would not contend for ever, nor be always wrath, lest the spirit should fail that he had made. Justice replies, God is the *Deut. 32.* God of Truth, his Word is Truth, he hath *4.* done wonderful things with an established *Isai. 25.1.* truth. Mercy replied, The mercies of the Lord are everlasting mercies. God *Psal. 110;* is abundant in mercy, and he delighteth *5.* in mercy; and though his Truth reach *1 Pet. 1.3.* the Clouds, yet his mercies are above the *Psal. 108.* Heavens: and his Mercy-Seat is ever *4.* before his face. Justice said, God complains that none calleth for Justice, nor *Isai. 59.4.* pleadeth for Truth. Mercy answers, We find the Prayer of the Prophet was, in *Hab. 3.2.* wrath remember mercy: Another Prophet saith, O Lord God of Hosts, how long will it be ere thou shew mercy? To which the Lord replies, *I was jealous Zech. 1.* for Zion with great fury, and am sore dis- *14, 15, 16.* pleased with the Heathen; for I was but a little angry, and they helped forward the affliction; therefore I am returned to them with mercy. And another Prophet saith, *I have seen his ways and will heal Isa. 57.18.* him; I will lead him also, and shew comfort to him and to his mourners.

Then the Lamb began to open his mouth, saying, What is the meaning of

E

these

these Scriptures? (of which not one tittle shall fail) He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, who opened not his mouth. He was wounded for our Transgressions, he was bruised for our Iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed. The Lord hath laid on him the Iniquities of us all, who shall declare his Generation? It pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, and the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied. My Righteous Servant shall justify many, and shall bear their Iniquities, because he hath poured out his Soul unto the death, and was numbred with the Transgressors, he bare the sins of many, and made Intercession for the Transgressors.

Therefore to draw to a conclusion,
 Rev. 13. 8. lo, hear the sum of all; I am the Lamb slain from the beginning, I am the Lamb brought to the slaughter, I must be wounded for their Transgressions, and bruised for their Iniquities, my stripes must heal their wounds. The Eternal Decree hath laid on me the Iniquity of all. My Generation cannot be found out, I was from all Eternity. My Soul must be the Propitiatory Sacrifice, which must satisfy the rigor

Mal. 3. 3.

rigor of Justice, and pacifie the offended Majesty, and justify many, and make Intercession for their Transgressions. Not for all the transgressions that have been committed since the wonderful Creation; for there were some excellent beings, that did fall irreparably, and those were such as were entituled Angels of Light, but now Inhabitants of utter Darkness: but as it is the joy of Martyrs, when they consider that their blood hath proved the Seed of the Church; so let it be your comfort, that my blood-shed will raise up faine man-kind, to fill up the places in Heaven of those, whom Pride and Rebellion hath hurled into the lowest pit: for he that could out of the most improbable matter (stones) raise children to Abraham, can out of the posterity of faine Adam raise children unto God. But those great wonders must be done by ways and means which he himself hath prescribed; therefore Justice do thy office, and satisfie thy self in my blood. I am that Lamb of God that taketh away or beareth the sins of the world; I am Heavens Dove, descending (by the Holy Spirit recorded) with

A Discourse of the Lamb of God.

Rev. 14. 1. a heavenly voyce from God, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,* whose mercy hath found out a way for me, to ascend triumphantly to Mount *Sion*, with the Banner of Love o're my followers, and the Ensign of Victory o're my Enemies; and hath given me power to take the Seven-sealed Book, out of his hand that sitteth upon the Throne, in which are the high and unrevealed mysteries of God, where I shall hear that Song; *Worthy is the Lamb to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof;* for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood; and hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests; and therefore Blessing, Glory, Honour, and Power be to him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for evermore. *Amen.*

A Prayer

A Prayer to the Lamb of God.

HOly Jesus, the well-beloved Son of God, Mat. 3. 17.
be merciful to me a miserable sinner.
 O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of Joh. 1. 29.
the world, have pity upon me a miserable
sinner; thou that wert wounded for my trans-
gressions, heal my wounds, which sin hath
made in me. Thou upon whom was laid the
iniquity of all, cleanse me from all my ini-
quities. Thou whose soul was made an of-
fering for sin, grant me a discharge from all
sin. Thou that wert dumb before the shearers,
and openedst not thy mouth, let thy silence
expiate the guilt of my cursed speaking.
 Thou who art the righteous Servant which Isai. 53.
shall justifie many, admit me (though un-
worthy) amongst them whom thou wilt justifi-
fy. Thou that makest Intercession for trans-
gressors, intercede for me. Thou that wert
bruised for my iniquity, let thy stripes heal
my sores. Thou that wert only worthy to
open the Sealed Book of Gods Eternal De- Rev. 5. 9.
cree, open the dulness of my understanding
in the knowledg of thy will, and give me
 E 3 power

power to obey it. Thou that didst ascend triumphantly into Heaven, attended there with many thousands, having thy Fathers Name written on their foreheads, write thy Fathers Name on my forehead, I beseech thee, that I may also follow thee. Thou who art a Lamb for innocence, let the vertue thereof cover my guilt. Thou who art the

Jer. 23. 6. Lord our Righteousness, justifie me. Thou who art the well-beloved Son of God, let Hea-

Mar. 3. 16. vens Dove, the holy Spirit descend upon me, in such proportions of heavenly grace, as

Isai. 1. 18. may wash my scarlet sins as white as snow, and my crimson sins as white as wool. Let the Fountain of Salvation run continually on my soul. Gather me a poor sheep of thy

-
Psal. 23. 1, 2, 3. fold, and feed me continually in the pleasant pastures of righteousness: for my Shepherd is the living Lord, to whom I entirely sacrifice myself, that I may follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Now to the Shepherd of Israel, that sits between the Cherubims, to the Lamb that was slain, to Heavens winged Messenger, the holy Dove, be ascribed all glory, honour, praise, and thanksgiving, now and for ever and ever. Amen.



A
TREATISE
Touching the
Blessed SACRAMENTS :
And first of
BAPTISM,

WHich is the ordinary means of saving grace, and commanded by Christ. It is the strengthening of our faith in the acknowledgment and confession of the holy Trinity, into whose Name we are baptized. In which mysteries of divine knowledg, we ought to be very studious, so far as they concern our interest in our Salvation: but curiously to dive beyond our Commission, we have no Deut. 29. warrant, though we are commanded to 29.
B 4 search

search the Scriptures, in which are our hopes of eternal life, they being they, as Christ saith, which testify of him; therefore our duty is to be more earnest therein, because in our Baptism we put on Christ, receive our names, and are admitted into the family of God; and by that admission constantly we are obliged to endeavour to serve him faithfully to our lives end: then are we by Gods Spirit consigned to the Adoption of Children of the most High, and have liberty to cry *Abba, Father.*

Rom. 8.
 15. Baptism is the sign of our Christian Profession, by it we are made members of the visible Church, and of our union with Christ our Head; where having put on Christ, he *pours clean water* upon us, as he hath promised in the Covenant of Grace. Christ instituted the Sacraments, and enjoined us to the practice thereof; which when we rightly perform in obedience to Gods command, it becomes an acceptable Sacrifice: For Christ bidding his Disciples to go and teach, and observe his commands, for our encouragement saith, *Lo I am with you always even to the end of the world.* Sacraments are signs of the mutual

Ezek. 36.
 25, 26.
 Mat. 28.
 19.
 Mar. 14.
 22.

mutual Covenant between God and his Gen. 17.
 People, as in the Law Circumcision 113
 was, and in the Gospel the Sacrament
 of the Lords Supper is, *As oft as ye eat 1 Cor. 11.*
of this Bread, and drink of this Cup, ye 16.
shew forth the Lords death till he come: or
 as we may say, ye are mindful of what
 he hath done and suffered for you; as
 it is written when the Passover was to
 be celebrated, for the Peoples delive-
 rance out of *Egypt*; that day was to be
 kept in remembrance throughout their
 Generations for ever. And as a Sacra-
 ment is an external sign, of an inward
 and spiritual grace, so Baptism is an
 outward sign of an inward grace, which
 is the sprinkling of the blood of Christ,
 the vertue whereof *mortifies the old man, Gal. 5. 24.*
with his corruptions and lusts, with a re-
 newing of the new man by faith in Jesus
 Christ.

But how doth Faith confirm to us
 Christ and his Benefits? By his pro-
 mise, that *whosoever believeth on him Joh. 3. 15.*
should not perish, but have everlasting life.
 The drift of this Sacrament with the
 other, being only to instruct us, and
 confirm to us Gods everlasting love.
 They are the Seals of Gods Covenant,
 and

and pledges of his Promise, and a testimony of our thankfulness : and also by these to instruct them that shall come after. The true use of Sacraments consisteth of Faith and Repentance ; Faith in Gods Word, and Promises, with a full trust and reliance thereon. Repentance for abusing his goodness, and provoking his justice, and turning his graces into wantonness : for all our Salvation consists in the only Sacrifice of Christ offered on the Cross for us. And though some contemners of the duty of Sacraments, say, there is in them no conferring grace, yet being instituted by Gods Ordinance they confirm and establish faith, though it be said, *Faith comes by hearing the Word preached*, that being one of the external means, by which the Spirit of God works belief in our hearts without the Sacraments ; the which Word is commanded to be preached to all, without exception ; the Sacraments only to the faithful and penitent members of the Church ; for they preserve the memory of Gods goodness to us, whereby our thankfulness is stirred up to glorification. The Sacrament of Baptism is

Rom. 10.
17.

is to confirm our faith in the promise of
 grace, we being baptized into the Name *Mat. 28.*
of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into 19.
 whose care we are taken; and in this we
 profess our faith in the Trinity, which
 is the life of a Christian. Christ saith;
Go and baptize, and observe what I com- *20.*
mand you. We find his mercy saved us
 by the washing of Regeneration, and
 renewing of the Holy Ghost. Here we *Tic. 3. 5.*
 have Christs command to be baptized
 in the Name of the Father, Son, and
 Holy Ghost, which signifies that these
 three Persons are one true God. The
 Father receiveth us into favour, for the
 Sons sake, and the Holy Ghost is given *Joh. 24.*
 by the Son from the Father; whereby *49.*
 he makes good his word, which he
 spake, in sending the Promise of the
 Father to his Disciples. But here riseth
 a question, Holy Writ saith, *He that* *Mark 16.*
believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; 16.
 How then doth Baptism belong to
 children, who are incapable of Faith
 and Repentance? Yea, they are of the
 Covenant which God made everlasting,
 which then was Circumcision; and Bap-
 tism coming in the stead thereof hath
 the same effect; for Sacraments have
 no

no vertue of themselves but by the gracious promise of Christ, whose Spirit with the Word, gives Life, and Sanctification; for Christs Word was large after his Resurrection, to baptize all.

Mat. 28.

19.

Rom. 11.

33.

Yet God doth not so bind Salvation to the Sacraments, that there are none saved without them; for his ways are past finding out; and for us to conclude that all are damned, that have not the advantages we have in order to Salvation; is as much as to say, that God is more severe, then merciful, seeing it is said, that Christ died for all: modestly we are therefore to say, God knows who are his. If an Infant dye before it can be made partaker of the sacred Seal of Baptism, God in his good pleasure can sanctifie at all seasons; as we find instances of such, which have been sanctified both in and from the womb; and the desire of the Parents is very acceptable in this case with God; who would have all his Church owned by this Character, to testify their unity with the Catholick Church, who are all baptized by one Spirit in one Faith, in our Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth us from all sins: and by Baptism,

tism, a Christians life is hid with God in Christ, whereby we have right to many excellent Priviledges, being all the children of God by faith. Faith is the Fountain of Life in the Soul, Baptism the Instrument to shew our Obedience to Gods command. Children belong to the Covenant and Church as well as those of full age. Christ himself saith, *of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.* And seeing Christ commands to baptize all, that word (*All*) includes Infants also, their Interest being included in the Promise to believing Parents; witness that of the Apostle, *else are your Children unholy.* And though God cannot be tied to means, yet 'tis not safe to defer a duty, or slight our Lords commands, or to deprive children of the ordinary remedy of Original Sin, in which all are conceived and born. Nor do we even find that Christ or his Disciples did ever forbid Baptism to children. We read Sacraments are holy signs of heavenly blessings, which though of themselves they cannot confer grace, yet they are as Seals annexed to our Pardon, for the forgiveness of Sins. By Baptism we become adopted children of God by visible

Gal. 3. 27.

Mat. 19.

14.

Acts 2. 39.

fible marks, and incorporated into God inseparably. It is as the *Jordan* to cleanse us from the Leprosie of Original Sin, the Balsam to heal all our sores; they are the Conduits to convey the Water of Life: the two Olive branches, which through the two Golden Pipes, do empty the Oil of Gladness into our Souls. We read *Adam* fell by the fault of another; and therefore it is reasonable to receive children into Baptism on the faith of another. We find Men, Women, and Children entred into Covenant with God, and strangers also from the highest to the lowest; and shall the *Jews* children have a priviledg above Christian children? Or, Shall they be denied to be members of the Church, out of which there's no Salvation? Or, Shall the faith of Believers in bringing their children to Baptism, be less acceptable than theirs that brought the man to be cured of the Palsie?

Mark 2.5. Duly consider the benefits we partake thereby, which is to be made Members of Christ, Children of God, and the Temples of the Holy Ghost; Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven; into which none can enter, except he be born of Water

1 Cor. 3, 17.

Rom, 8, 17.

Water and of the Spirit : Of Water, Joh. 3. 3. which is meant by Baptism; and by Spirit, entring into a new spiritual life, which is the Churches judgment.

The benefits of both Sacraments are one to us. As Circumcision was a sign of the Covenant made with *Abraham* and all his Posterity, by the coming of Christ; so in Baptism we make solemn Profession of our faith in Christ, and bind our selves to him, by faith in his Word, and obedience to his Commands. In like manner doth the other blessed Sacrament.



OF THE LORDS SUPPER.

Luk. 12.
19.

IN the use it obligeth' us in point of Obedience to Gods Commandes; *Do this* (saith our Saviour) *in remembrance of me.* It is an action instituted by himself at his fare-well Supper with his Disciples, as a memorial that his Body was crucified, and his Blood shed for our sins. By which he hath made our peace with God, and united us by faith unto himself, and we are made partakers of himself and all his benefits. Even his who gave himself a ransom for all; though none have benefit thereby, but such as lay hold on him by a true and lively faith. And whereas many omit this service, out of an opinion that they are not worthy to partake of so sacred an Ordinance; such scruples should be laid aside by all that hope to be delivered by Christs Death
and

and Passion, from eternal damnation. All our Preparations cannot make us worthy, but he is worthy whom he in his mercy accepts as worthy, for he saith, *As oft as ye shall eat of this Bread,* 1 Cor. 11. *and drink of this Cup, ye shew the Lords* 26. *Death till he come*; which is the manifestation of his infinite bounty towards us by his Death and Passion, for by the eating of his Body which was crucified, and drinking his Blood which was shed, we become one with him, and he with us; for we are members of his Body, 1 Cor. 12. though he be in Heaven, and we on 27. Earth, yet we are knit by one Spirit, to our Head Christ Jesus; for whose sake we are received into favour with God: and if our Obedience answer his Command, we should drest our neglect of the holy Sacrament; seeing he saith, *Drink ye all of this.* And when he saith *the Bread is his Body, and the Wine* 27. *his Blood*, we must apprehend it spiritually, (for Sacraments are but signs of what is signified) for that which is seen is a corporal thing, but what they signifie is spiritual; and every worthy Communicant is a Member of Christs Body, he being the Head. What the
F Word

- Word promiseth are visible signs, but our Communion with Christ is spiritual, being Seals of the Holy Spirit. And if a reason be demanded, What it is to eat Christs Body, and drink his Blood? It is to be made partaker of Christ and all his benefits; for thereby we become one with Christ, and Christ with us; and by faith in his Death and Passion, we believe the remission of sins and everlasting life, that we are reconciled to God, and grafted into Christ by the Holy Spirit. For Christ having once offered himself a Sacrifice for sin, sitteth on the right hand of God for ever, and maketh requests for us: therefore we may with more confidence approach the Lords Table, seeing we have an Intercessor that is able to save to the utmost all that come to God by him: and he hath said, Ye are my friends if ye do what I command you. Now we know his command is to come to the Lords Supper; for he saith, Do this in remembrance of me, for as oft as ye eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup, ye shew forth the Lords Death till he come, saith St. Paul; which is of so large an extent to our eternal happiness, as not to be slighted
- 1 Cor. 6.
17.
Heb. 9. 12.
Rom. 8.
34.
Heb. 7. 25.
Joh. 15. 14.
Luk. 22.
19.
1 Cor. 11.
26.

sighted or neglected, by any that understand or hope for an interest in Christ, and his merit.

Having considered the benefit of the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, let us proceed a little farther. Who are they that ought to approach to the Table of the Lord? Even all that are sincerely penitent. All that out of a real sense of their own unworthiness, truly confess their sins, and are unfeignedly sorry for them, more in a filial fear of offending God, than for dread of any punishment whatever. All those that are baptized, and have a lively faith in Christ, and all that put their trust in him, and hope for forgiveness of their sins for his sake. All that hunger and thirst after righteousness in Christ, and all Ordinances of holy living. All such as can examine their Faith and Repentance, their Charity, their resolution of Obedience to all Gods Commands, so such is the Invitation of God sent.

Mat. 22.
26.

Now having shewn who they are that are invited to come, let us a little consider, what the meaning of the words are; What is required of those that come to the Supper of the Lord? for

there's much to be done by every one
that comes to holy Duties. In the
Law there was a Sacrifice yearly, for the
commemoration of sin, acknowledging
their guilt and just punishments; and
well it were if we but keep a daily re-
gister of our failings, in all our per-
formances of holy services, and of our
doings of evil such as to be a humble
-confession of the one, and a labouring to
-redeem the other; our consciences may be the
itself in the day of some great reckoning.

1 Cor. 11.
28.

We know St. Paul saith, but as he saith
sacramentally, for many forwardly ad-
venture, without demanding this com-
mand; or that Text, the Lord is terrible
above all things; and therefore the more
diligently to be looked into, the bet-
ter to understand the danger, and the
sooner to prevent it. For if there be
the least affection to sin as if there is
no soundness in the heart; and more-
over if there be disorders there, a true communi-
on of the whole man is very requisite;
such as whereby we may manifest our
endeavours, in conquering our lusts,
and unbridled passions; giving up our
selves to God, in humility, and obe-
dience to his commands, how contrary
soever

soever to our own wills, taking Gods Word for the Gospel Promises, in a low condition as well as in the highest: not casting upon sad events to ensue, because present help appears not; but to consider what hope had *Elijah*, when he said, He only remained a Prophet of 1 King. 18. the Lord, and his life threatened to be lost before next day. What support Jer. 32. 2. had *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon, or *Peter* Act. 12. 5. in the Prison, when to be executed the next day: *David* in his danger at *Ziklag*, when his wives and family being taken captive, and carried away, all his goods lost, and himself in hazard of being stoned: yet here was faith, *David* comforted himself in God. This is the sure Anchor which in any calamity, the soul (in midst of all storms and tempests of the worlds perturbations, the Devils temptations, or our own evil inclinations) may rely upon. Faith is the main mast of the Ship of our Souls, in which Christ being Pilot, can never miscarry. He hath so fastened all the large Bills of our Debts to his Cross, and sealed our Acquittance with his Blood, that if by faith, and obedience we yield our selves his, then nothing

Rom. 8.

33.

can be laid to our charge being in Christ Jesus: for our interest is in Gods free grace in Christ; which made

1 Cor. 2. 2.

St. Paul so zealously pronounces, *I desire to know nothing but Christ crucified*, for from him he found, his faith was secured, by that incomparable expression

2 Cor. 12.

9.

of his, *My grace is sufficient for thee*; his Word wanted no surety: but they which doubt of that, want both the staff of comfort in the Promises, and the Cordial of his Love to uphold from Despair. But where Faith leads the Van, Love brings up the Rere; no danger can beat off a faithful Souldier, from scaling the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem, their zeal makes them diligent to carry Jacob's Ladder with them, and Love takes care to secure the Rere, with this inviting, winning promise, Fear not, we have the whole armour of God for our defence, and the power of his might, with the truth of his Word; that

Ephes. 6.

11, 13.

Rom. 8. 28.

all things shall work together for good to them that fear him; even in sadness, pain, and distress, thus to rest confident, is an argument of a true faith. In this business let not Repentance be forgotten, which though clad in a doleful array,

eyes

eyes sealed up with tears, yet lift up to Heaven, and breath stopped with sighs, a voice uttered in groans, in a Publicans *Luk. 18.* posture, smiting the breast in a sense of *13.* her passed life, in which all manner of evil inclinations produced carnal affections, which broke forth into bestial actions, and so over-run the whole man, that there was no member of the body, nor faculty of the soul, which was not corrupted thereby, and therefore with more caution to be considered. Yet her welcome no less, though thus deformed, for she had engraven on her fore-head this Text, *He that Prov. 18.* *confesseth his sins, and forsaketh them, shall 13.* find mercy, and, if we confess our sins, he *1 Joh. 1.9.* is faithful and just to forgive them, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; which conducted her with safety to the feet of Jesus, where mercy rains showers of grace on penitent sinners, which penitence must be manifested, in all the offices of true repentance, by redeeming the time, in the exercises of holiness, and piety throughout our life; for our souls being wounded, there's no better bath to cleanse them than the waters of true repentance. The Sacrifice, with

Mat. 11.
28.

which God is well pleased, is a contrite spirit, and a broken heart; these he hath said he will not despise; but if it were possible to weep Rivers of tears, unless they flow from a penitent eye they cannot appease Gods wrath, or obtain pardon. They that go *heavy laden* under the burthen of their sins, must lay them at the foot of Gods Altar, and beg to have them all destroyed, and himself to be accepted, as a reasonable Sacrifice. Repentance is a duty of the whole life, and must continue as long as life; for as long as we live, we sin, and therefore as long as we live, we must repent, not by open Profession, which savours of Hypocrisie, but by a secret humiliation, and sincere contrition, resolve against all sin, which will be very difficult to withstand; and therefore a true penitent will double his guards, watchfulness with Prayer, knowing that there are none that can conquer all temptations; yet take care, dally not with thy soul, in the least inclination to sin, but call all the aids of grace to thy assistance; prudently to act, and wisely to defeat all Satans stratagems: 'tis (I confess) a hard task; for the best are not always secure from
being

being surprised; and though they labour hard, and have begged to subdue the power of some predominant passion, or some presumptuous folly; they yet remain under the vexation of a hasty peevish spirit, which they can better bewail than subdue: From hence Religion will tell us it is not safe, to sit still under our own strength, lest we be ore-powered by temptation; therefore as the Prophet saith, *up and be doing*: so let us set upon repentance, and demonstrate it by acts of charity; and dereliction of the worlds vanities; being tenderly affected to do justly in all our affairs; to seek peace, and ensue it; and renounce all sin, as much as possible; and that in reality, weighing our sins against the just fears of an offended God, to which we must implore the assistance of the Holy Spirit, to carry the affections of our Souls above these earthly Dominions. The best evidence of our love to God is a holy hatred of all sin: because it's that which God hates; and therefore our greatest grief is, or should be, to have an adherence to sin, or to return to it. A true Penitent will labour to bring forth fruits of Repentance, as Mar. 3. 8.

John

John Baptist adviseth, which is purity, holiness, and amendment of life, that we should die unto sin, unto the world, and to our own self-interest, and give up our selves wholly to God in Christ, *Rom. 12. 1.* which is as *St. Paul* saith, *our reasonable service* : for surely where but one sin becomes customary, we shall find it a hard work to suppress that : much more when we are to mortifie the sins of a whole life ; therefore the work of Repentance must never be at an end ; nor our watchfulness for fear of a relapse, which the soul is most prone to, without a diligent guard prudently to secure her, from returning to her former follies, which will sink her lower, and cause her loads of infirmities to set more heavy on her ; Therefore we implore thee, glorious Lord, discover to us our infirmities, that we may with great severity labour to prevent them ; and let thy grace perfect our duties, that washing our hands in Innocency, and our Souls in the blood of our Redeemer, we may with reverence and comfort compass thy Altar, and be accepted with thy Elect to thy Table here, and by thy infinite mercy, and gracious mediation,

mediation, admitted to partake of holiness and glory in thy Eternal Kingdom. Amen.

A Prayer in order to the Sacraments.

Glorious Lord God, who in thy holy Word hast instituted holy Rites and Ceremonies, as marks to distinguish thy Church from the common and sad distractions, now started up by variety of Opinions amongst us. Of which the blessed Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper are very principal ones. Be pleased for thy own sake, and the honour of the Truth of thy holy Word, to manifest thy self glorious, in the preservation thereof. Our Saviours first Commission after his Resurrection was to Baptize in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, saying, he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved according to his mercy by the washing of the new birth, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, thereby to mortifie the lusts of the flesh,

Mar. 28.
19.

Mar. 16.
16.

- flesh, that we should live no longer therein, and in his farewell Supper with his Disciples, gave not only an ensample to follow, but also a command, saying, Do this in remembrance of me; therefore I will praise thee with my whole heart, and wait upon thee for thy unspeakable mercy in regenerating me by thy Holy Spirit, and for the remission of my sins by the blood of thy Son, who said, except ye be born of Water, and of the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And also except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no life in you; but they which do according to thy will have eternal life in them, and thou hast promised that thou wilt raise them up at the last day. O dear Saviour, I magnifie thy goodness for the Revelation of thy Will, in order to my approach to the holy Sacrament, of which St. Paul teacheth me to examine my self, and therefore I beseech thee let thy grace assist me herein, to discover to me my necessity thereof, and also a sense of my own unworthiness of such unvaluable mercies, which may produce in me a perfect loathing of all my former corruptions, with a real dereliction of them; and bring me to an humble

humble confession of all my sins, with true repentance and godly sorrow for them, with holy resolutions of amendment. And blessed Land, vouchsafe to afford me such portions of thy grace, as may conquer all my Passions, and subdue all thy Lusts, and ravish my affections after Jesus in all holy Ordinances. And further I beseech thee, to bestow upon me a true faith in thy Promises, with an universal Obedience to all thy Commands. O let thy Spirit dwell in me, that by it I may be united unto thee inseparably in all the duties of Love and Charity, and kindle such a flame of Zeal and Devotion in me, as may consume all earthly Affections and violent Passions of peevish anger, and rude disorders. And give me aid from Heaven to fight manfully under thy Banner against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, that so I may the better keep my Vow made to thee in my Baptism, to continue thy faithful souldier and servant unto my lives end. And whensoever thy Invitations to thy holy Table are sent forth, let me labour hard to get the wedding Garment of a sanctified Soul, with all ornaments of Repentance, Faith, Charity, Humility, and Obedience. And so casting my self at the foot-stool of thy grace,

er. 2. loH
or

er. 2. 1
2
2

Mat. 22.
11.

Hol. 2. 19, grace, who hast promised to marry me to
20.

Rev. 19

8.

9.

thee for ever in mercy and faithfulness: Now in this blessed Sacrament confirm thy espousals to me here, till thou consummate the marriage in Heaven, there to be glad in fine Linnen, clean, and white, the Righteousness of Saints: where I shall enjoy the truth of that saying; Blessed are they that are called to the Supper of the Lamb; which blessing, O Lord, vouchsafe to me, and all that love the Lord Jesus: To whom with the Father, and Holy Spirit, be ascribed all glory, honour, laud, praise, and thanksgiving, now and for evermore. Amen.

MEMENTO

For those who are called to a
Publick concern, either for
Church or Family Duties, or
otherwise Instruct or Reprove
others, to be very careful of their
own duty, of avoiding sin in
themselves, and of a holy life.

Examination is one of our prin-
cipal concerns, of all our inte-
rest spiritual and temporal, both
for religious and secular employments:
for many are quick-sighted in the im-
perfections of others abroad; but pur-
blind at home, discerning nothing but
what's brought close to their eyes. O-
thers are so open-ear'd, as they hear all
that reflects as dirty upon others, but
deaf to any thing that sounds not well
of themselves. Dumb to speak in the
behalf of others, though perhaps their
Conscience tells them, they are unjustly
con-

Luk. 18.
11.

Joh. 5. 39.

condemned; but witty to palliate their own faults, though spots not easily washed off; the one favouring of uncharitableness, the other of vain-glory: therefore an impartial examination of our selves by others, and others by our selves, and both by the Rule of Gods Word, is a very necessary duty. For want of which the proud Pharisee buried all the good works he boasted of in the Pit of Oblivion. There are many very severe in condemning others, that can not a look on themselves as persons unconcerned: but as we are commanded to search the Scriptures, (*for in them we have eternal life*) so ought we with great diligence to search our hearts, lest the light of grace be clouded through selfishness or vanity: therefore it behoves those that are called to be Instructors of others, to try whether the fear of Gods judgments have not had a larger influence to restrain their corrupt natures, than filial obedience to his commands; and whilst they reprove others for negligence, or looseness in Gods service, to be diligent and reverent in their own; whilst they condemn presumption in others,

to walk humbly and in fear themselves. They that reprove Swearing and Prophaning the sacred Name of God, let them have a care they abuse it not in idle discourses. Those that cry down lying in others, be careful to speak truth. They that condemn detraction in others, let them not black their mouths with slander. Those that detest covetousness in others, stop not their ears against the cry of the poor. Those that condemn Impatience in others, let not the reins loose to their own Passions. Many more might be instanced, but let this caution serve for all: to look that what they judg as ill in others, they may not over-look in themselves, as *Rom. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.* For my own part, I must truly confess to Gods glory and my own shame, that whatsoever evil I have re- proved by the Word of God in others, I am tainted with the same: and sure I am, that *God is greater than my heart,* and *1 Joh. 3.* knows more by me than I do by my *20.* self. The sense hereof made David so passionately cry out, *Lord, who can un- Psal. 19.* derstand his errors? *cleanse thou me from 12.* my secret faults; which consideration also made *St. Paul* cry out, *O wretched man Rom. 7.* *that 24.*

Rom. 7.
14.

1 Cor. 9.
27.

2 Cor. 13.
5.

that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? before he complained he was carnal, sold under sin; for the good he would, he could not do, the evil he would not, he did. And if St. Paul found it so difficult to fulfil the Law of God, how great will our task be? for he saith, he kept his body in subjection, lest whilst he taught others, himself should be a cast-away: therefore saith he, *Examine your selves, whether ye are in the Faith*, in regard we know that Jesus Christ is in us, except we be Reprobates. Protract not this necessary duty; for if David in his health and strength conceived there was but a step between him and death, by reason of a carnal mans unjust displeasure, what dreadful judgment may we expect, that so highly do provoke the great Judge of Heaven continually? Haste, Haste therefore, for the business is weighty. Let us consider, we have frail bodies, and those subject to sad distempers; we have large purposes, and but a short time to accomplish them; a long journey from Earth to Heaven, a dangerous way, in which are many snares, temptations of the world, in which rangeth the roaring Lion, the seducing Serpent, and a malicious Devil: therefore

therefore our special care must be always to have an open eye to avoid the allurements of the world; a listning ear, to avoid the whispers of the subtle Serpent, and the foul suggestions of a lying Devil, which to flesh and blood is impossible. For if our first Parents were betrayed, who had the excellency of admiration and the most lively representation of his Maker; we have little hope of security: only God who said to *Jacob* Gen. 31. 2; in his journey to *Padan Aram*, he would not forsake him, will also guard us, if we lay hold on him by Faith and Prayer; for to him all things are possible. He will either destroy our Enemies, or show us an easier passage by *Jacob's Ladder*, which reach'd from *Earth to Heavens*; him therefore let us implore for his favour herein, to encourage our hopes, that we may obtain by the guidance of his Grace the top of the Ladder, where he stands to receive all that long after him, and in our first setting forward, we must Petition him, that he will descend by his Spirit into our Souls, that we may ascend by unwearied affections to him: and for our advance, let our first step be as *Ezekiel's* Back 8. 3; was, lift up by the Spirit above the Earth,

- Earth, and carried by Divine Inspiration
 2. into Heaven. Let the next advance be,
 as he was called to view the abominati-
 ons of the House of *Israel*, so let us view
 our life past, that we may come to a per-
 fect loathing of our selves, and then in
 the sense thereof meekly prostrate our
 selves before God in humble confessions,
 true repentance, holy mourning, and un-
 feigned contrition for them, imploring
 that one ray of his Charity may dart up-
 on us who are objects of pity, and sub-
 jects of compassion; to which if the Di-
 vine Providence condescend, we may
 3. advance one step higher, by throwing
 our selves at the foot-stool of his grace,
 2ach.3. 5. though clad in filthy garments, we may
 obtain that grace vouchsafed to *Jehoshua*
 the High-Priest, to take away the filthy
 garments from us, & to cause our iniqui-
 ties to pass from us, and to cloath us with
 4. change of Raiment, and then by Faith
 and Prayer advance one step higher by
 heart-pantings, and soul-ravishing affe-
 5. ctions after God, and from thence by
 divine aspiration ascend one step higher,
 and catch hold of his feet that stands on
 the top of the Ladder; for he is the Al-
 mighty in whom we trust, and to whom
 we

we lift up our face, with whom we will wrestle for a blessing, and not let him go, but prostrate ourselves before him, in Contemplation of his Excellencies, there to admire his Wisdom, adore his Majesty, obey his Sovereignty, magnifie his goodness, hunger and thirst after his Righteousness, and give praises to his Name, which is great, wonderful, and holy; and from Contemplation enter into Vision, and from Vision to the Possession of those unspeakable Joys, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard; neither hath the heart of man comprehended, what God hath prepared for them that love him; there with the Twenty four Elders will we fall down and worship him that sits upon the Throne; to whom blessing, glory, honour, and power be given for ever and ever.

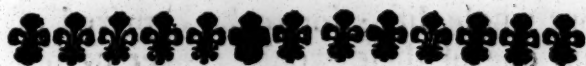
A Prayer.

O Gracious Lord, look upon me a miserable wretch, yet thy own creature, undone by reason of a body of sin, and death, which subjects me to all manner of evil. O thou that camest into the world to save sinners, suffer me not to pe-

rish in thy presence, with the saving Name of Jesus in my mouth. I beseech thee, discover to me my own unworthiness, that I may timely and truly repent them. Let thy grace effect that in me, that thou requirest of me. Make me diligent in searching my own heart, severe in condemning my self, but gentle and charitable in condemning others. Thou that art the Fountain of Salvation, distil upon me such dew of holiness, as may purge out of me whatsoever is displeasing to thee, or prejudicial to any; not censuring others; nor justifying my self, but always to remember our Saviours saying, Let him that is without sin, cast the first stone; and also to pull out the beam in my own eye, so shall I see the better to pull out the mote that is in my brothers. Make me to receive reproof thankfully, to give it meekly and prudently, vouchsafe me such a portion of grace, as may reduce me to a better obedience. And by all thy mercies, I beseech thee, let thy Holy Spirit extinguish all my violent passions and irregularities of what kind soever: what thou seest wanting in me in order to thy command, vouchsafe to bestow upon me for the Sons sake of thy love: to whom with the Father, and holy Spirit be all glory, honour, power, might, majesty, and dominion, now and for evermore, Amen. A

Joh. 8.7.

Mat. 7.5.



A Contemplation
OF
G O D S M E R C Y
AND
M A N ' S M I S E R Y .

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Joh. 1, 1.
Word was God, and in God; whose
love invited its self (for no other
thing could deserve it,) to communicate
its self, and produce creatures out of
nothing; with forms and qualities various
and admirable. Moreover the great Ar-
chitect of the World, out of Earth
and Dust framed our Bodies, of comely
shape, perfectly accomplished; some
to vessels of honour, ennobled with
Wisdom, Knowledg, Understanding,
Judgment, Memory, Senses, Reason,
Will, and Affections; with vertues and
graces in the heart and soul: for the

least of which we owe the service of our whole life ; for to be deprived of any one of these would render us but as the beasts that perish. And farther he honours us with the highest dignity that poor mortals can be capable of, which is, to serve him, who is the high Lord of Heaven and Earth ; which is all the Rent he requires of us for our lives, with the accommodations of health, wealth, liberty, and all other good things we do enjoy : for we are but Tenants at will, and have no power of our selves. And when we consider that God hath drawn us out of nothing, and that he can in a moment reduce us to our first principle of nothing ; who can but in a holy rapture admire his Infiniteness, adore his Majesty, acknowledg his Goodness, tremble at his Judgments, and melt into soul ravishing affections for his Love ? Again, when we consider the ingratitude of our rebellious nature, which in an instant deprived us of all happiness, and left us liable to all the direful judgments which an abused mercy could inflict ; and those members which were once their Makers glory, are now subject

ject to all doleful malady, and fearful judgments, which are the portions of sin : for those eyes that were made to be lift up to Heaven in pure devotion, are now ashamed to look toward the place where their Makers *honour dwel-* Psal. 26. 8.
leth, when they behold themselves bereft of their purity. Take a view of every other member of the body, and observe how weakness is mixed with misery, and ore-flown with calamity of body, and unsufferable passions of mind : breathing forth nothing but condemnation, destruction, and death. O ! the secret labyrinth into which Satan leads the soul, and then leaves it in despair, without hope to get out, or possibility of sweet repose to body or mind ; but liable to all mis-fortunes, and all these for our rebellion against our great Creator, whose gracious Pro- Psal. 107.
vidence can make the Desert a pleasant 34. 35. 36.
entertainment to his servants, and a fruitful Land to become barren to the wicked, who are strangers to the ways of vertue ; for vertue draws blessing and felicity to it : but the hearts of the wicked are so filled with bitterness, that they can find no remedy, ease, or relief.

lief. From hence let us ruminate the
 state of our souls, when totally lost,
 for whose redemption nothing could
 satisfy, but the blood of his only Son :
 beside, his incomparable blessings on our
 bodies, having made them his Temples,
 which is of so great advantage to us,
 as thereby we receive his commands,
 (which are not grievous) and are taught
 our duty; which is to fear him, and to
 walk in all his ways, to love him and to
 serve him, with all our hearts and with all
 our souls; and to keep his Commandments and
 Statutes, which he hath appointed for our
 good. To which he hath annexed many
 gracious Promises, which as so many
 Anchors secure the Ship of our Souls
 from sinking; as that when we pass
 through the * waters, he will be with us
 that we shall not be drowned: and through
 the † fire we shall not be burnt; for we are
 precious in his sight, honourable, and
 beloved of the holy one our Saviour.
 And farther, he hath given us the liber-
 ty to speak freely to him, and to put
 him in remembrance, that we may be justi-
 fied. Again, he hath promised to pour
 * clean water upon us, to cleanse us from
 our filthiness, to enable us to walk in his
 Statutes,

1 Cor. 3.
 16, 17.

1 Joh. 5. 3.
 Deut. 10.
 12, 13.

* Tribula-
 tion.

† Perse-
 cution.

Isa. 43. 2,
 3.

Isa. 43. 26.

* The
 graces of
 his Holy
 Spirit.

Ezek. 36.
 25.

Statutes, to keep his Judgments and to do them. And that he will never depart from us, to do us good, nor suffer us to depart from him. And that which is above all, to marry us to himself, in *Hof. 2. 19,* righteousness, mercy, compassion and faithfulness: *20.* all which gives us cause to admire the height, the depth, the length and breadth of the excellency of Christ Jesus, which passeth all understanding! From hence let us proceed to examination, how we have answered his demands, and performed the Covenant which we made in Baptism; but how slack we have been in the performance thereof, he only knows, who is the searcher of hearts: and yet so audacious we are, as we presume to press God to the performance of his Covenant, but forget our own; not considering that all Gods Promises are conditional to those that keep his Statutes; and though the Lord hath promised to do all these for his own sake, yet will *Ezek. 36,* he be sought unto by the House of Israel *37.* to perform it to them. Therefore it is high time to consult that Judgment and Reason wherewith he hath endued us, how to redeem what we cannot recal, and

and to petition his Grace to convey in-
 to us such portions of his Spirit as may
 enable us to make some returns of love
 to him, who is in goodness infinite,
 Fatherly in mercy to us, who are his
 little beings created by him, in sending
 up flames of holy devotion; as when
 the gentle Rain descends upon the
 Earth, making it fruitful to bring forth,
 then in some sweet ejaculations praying
 that the dew of the Holy Spirit may de-
 scend upon our barren souls to make it
 fruitful in Praises and Thanksgivings.
 When Thunder and Lightnings rend
 the Clouds, Storms, Inundations and
 Earth-quakes, those ministers of Justice
 are sent abroad, then to petition for some
 influences of grace, to secure his holy
 humbled ones, as he did the Children of
Israel, when his judgments were terri-
 ble among their Enemies: for all the Ele-
 ments arm themselves in Gods quarrel,
 and at his least Command: as we read, the
 water by drowning the old world, the
 fire by burning *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, the
 Air by driving back the Waters upon
 the *Egyptians*, the Earth by swallowing
 up *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; for God
 is the Conquerour, who can subdue
 what

Gen. 17. 12.

Gen. 19.

24.

Exod. 14.

21, 27.

Numb. 16.

32.

what he please, his Power being invincible, his Faith inviolable, his Promise unalterable, his Word infallible, and his Favours innumerable. We read the Soul of a good man is a Palace in which he delights to set his Throne, and he hath promised not to abandon those that serve him; for sweet is that yoke that relates us to Christ, whose service is our freedom, and makes us every way happy; and blessed is that life that loves and fears nothing but God, whose Providence is a Store-house for all our needs, and never wants a tender saving compassion for those that in a holy Passion hunger and thirst for his Grace; for Heavens eyes and ears are always open to relieve the oppressed: and Charity the Almoner of Heaven flies swift, carried on the wings of desire; which expands its bounty to all that in humility, innocence, or true repentance sue to Heaven for Sanctuary. And in regard our state of life is uncertain, (the date thereof being almost expired (for ought we know) it is requisite to make haste to ask counsel of Wisdom, who will advise us to throw our selves down at the foot-stool of Providence, and there

there resign our selves to attend his pleasure, as a delinquent, humbly and penitently to wait for pardon. As a servant, wait with cheerfulness his commands. As an Orphan, wait with Patience for a Guardian. As a Child, wait in Obedience for a Benediction: As a Spouse, wait in an endeared affection for the Bridegroom; so waiting in the several qualifications of relations, we may be assured we have a powerful God to defend us, an All-sufficient God to provide for us, a Jesus to our Saviour, an only Son for our Advocate, and the Holy Spirit to instruct us, who is the Pillar of Saints, light to the blind in the obscurity of Ignorance; and an Arbour to serve against the scorching heat of the day of Persecution.



The Prayer.

HOly Lord God, permit thy poor servant to speak to thy Majesty, who in the sense of thy mercy, and my own unworthiness, pour out my soul before thee. Great Lord, I confess, thou madest me of nothing, in which state I could not sin; but since I have made my self worse than nothing, by mar-
ring thy best workmanship through sin: which though I cannot hide from thy sight; yet I beseech thee blot out of thy remembrance. And though their voice cries loud for vengeance, yet Lord hear the Prayer of Jesus which cries louder for pardon; (Father forgive them, they know not what they do) Ah Lord, help me, who cannot tell what to say, for answering thy exceeding kindness with so great ingratitude, when having created me after thy own Image, I by my rebellion have so defaced it, as now it cannot be known to be thine: and whereas thou madest my body to be thy Temple, I have

A PRAYER.

have made it a den of thieves; and thereby
am left without excuse, for defacing the
one, and altering the property of the other:
yet gracious Lord, who hast eternal Treas-
ures of Grace, vouchsafe to renew thy
Image in me, and once more purifie my
heart that it may be a Temple for thy Holy
Spirit to inhabit: and with a Coal from
thy Altar kindle such holy fire therein, as
may consume all carnal affections, or what-
soever doth offend thee; and that the
flames of divine Love may ascend in such
pure Devotions, as may be an acceptable
Sacrifice to God the Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost. To whom be all glory, honour and
praise, world without end. Amen.

FINIS.

exand.



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